



# Customer Focus

*A service update newsletter for valued DAS customers*

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2008

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Customer Focus is a bi-monthly update about the Department of Administrative Services for Iowa state government agencies. For more information about DAS, please visit our website at <http://das.iowa.gov>.

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## Annual Benefits Enrollment and Change Period

Another year has gone by and it is time again for the annual enrollment and change period. This year's enrollment period will run from October 31 through December 1, 2008. Changes made during this period will be effective January 1, 2009. This is the time of the year when state employees need to review their benefits and see if any changes need to be made. During this period employees can:

- add eligible family members to her/his health insurance plan
- delete family members from her/his health insurance plan
- change the health plan he/she is enrolled in
- increase (with proof of insurability)

or decrease supplemental life insurance coverage

- change Pretax election
- enroll in the Flexible Spending Accounts for Health Care and Dependent Care

Please watch for more information about plan offerings and rates as well as information about Wellmark's expanded service area counties for the Blue Access and Blue Advantage plans. There will be educational sessions available to employees during this 30-day time period. Please visit the benefits website at <http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits.html> for more information about this year's enrollment and change period and for general benefits information.

## Managed Care Plans No Longer Offered

Effective January 1, 2009, the two UnitedHealthcare (UHC) managed care organization (MCO) plans will no longer be offered to State of Iowa employees.

Members enrolled in UnitedHealthcare Choice HMO and UnitedHealthcare Heritage Select must make a new plan selection during this year's enrollment and change period (Oct. 31 – Dec. 1, 2008).

After a thorough review of the 2009 renewal proposals from our health carriers and with input from an independent consultant, the State has determined that it is no longer cost effective or necessary to offer the UHC plans. Premiums submitted by UHC for these two plans for 2009 would have been more costly for employees than they have been in the past. The

## Benefits Expanded to Unmarried Children Under Age 25

One of the new things for the 2009 insurance plan year is the new law on over-age dependent coverage. During the 2008 legislative session, a bill was passed allowing state employees to continue to cover dependents ages 19 to 25 on their health and dental plans regardless of the dependents' full-time student status. These dependents must be unmarried and living in Iowa in order to be eligible to be added to a plan.

During the open health enrollment and change period for plan year 2009, employees are able to add these dependents to their health coverage. Once a dependent is added they cannot be removed from coverage until next year's enrollment and change period, unless there is a qualifying life event that affects the dependent's coverage. Over-

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## Flu vaccinations and Health Screenings Available for Employees

The Wellness Program has arranged for Iowa Health Systems to administer flu vaccines in 25 locations in the Des Moines Metro area and Ames during the months of October and November 2008. They are also performing health screenings in seven different locations.

Schedules and additional information are available on the Wellness website at [http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/wellness\\_events.html](http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/wellness_events.html).

### November Dates - Flu Vaccinations

Date	Time	Location
Nov. 6	10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	DOT, Lincoln Way, Ames, 1st Floor Administration Bldg, North Conf. Rm.
Nov. 7	10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Hoover Bldg, Fourth Floor, Rooms 429 & 430
Nov. 12	10 - 11 a.m.	Iowa Laboratory Facilities, 2240 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, Room AT209
Nov. 13	9 - 10 a.m.	Commerce, 350 Maple, Break Rm
Nov. 13	11 a.m. - 12 noon	Judicial Bldg, ICN Room
Nov. 13	1 - 2 p.m.	Hoover Bldg, 1st Floor, SE Conf Rms 1 & 2
Nov. 17	7 - 8:30 a.m.	Public Safety Bldg, 1st Floor Public Conf. Rm.
Nov. 19	7:30 - 9 a.m.	Capitol Bldg, Room 116
Nov. 21	8 - 10 a.m.	Lucas Bldg, Conf. Rm. 517
Visit <a href="http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/wellness_events.html">http://das.hre.iowa.gov/wellness/wellness_events.html</a> for more info		

## Managed Care Plans,

*continued from Page 1*

employee shares for family coverage for these plans would have been \$95.46 (UHC Choice) and \$6.12 (UHC Heritage Select) per month. In addition, Wellmark has expanded its MCO service area network and now covers all but nine counties in Iowa.

If you are enrolled in one of these plans, please review your options and either complete a new application or enroll online for the plan of your choice before December 1, 2008. Your new plan choice will go into effect January 1, 2009.

The two MCOs offered by Wellmark, Blue Access and Blue Advantage, have the same benefit design as the UHC plans. Blue Access is an open-model MCO as UHC Choice HMO was, and Blue Advantage is a primary-care model MCO as UHC Heritage Select was. In the past, employees may have felt that the Wellmark MCO network was not expansive enough in some areas of the state and into other surrounding states. We invite employees to check whether their providers are now under the Wellmark MCO network, which has grown considerably over the last two years, including in the Omaha area.

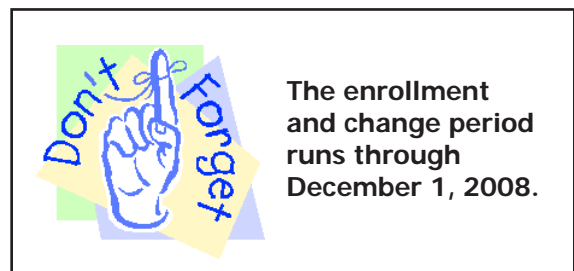
Please visit the DAS-HRE benefits website at <http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits.html> for more information and a link to the Wellmark website, [www.wellmark.com](http://www.wellmark.com), in order to check participating providers in your area.

## Over-age Dependents,

*continued from Page 1*

age dependents will not be able to be enrolled in employees' dental plans this year. Employees must wait until there is an open dental enrollment opportunity negotiated before they can cover additional dependents on their dental plan.

If these dependents do not qualify as tax dependents per the IRS, employees will be taxed on the fair market value of dependent coverage. The fair market value amount is determined by taking the difference between the single and family monthly premiums and dividing by the average number of dependents in the State's insurance plans. This dollar amount differs by plan. There will be a table on the benefits website that can help you get an idea of what the impact will be on your income. Please watch for more details during the enrollment and change period (Oct. 31 – Dec. 1) and visit the benefits website at <http://das.hre.iowa.gov/benefits.html>.



## Recycling Options Expand on the Capitol Complex

The Department of Administrative Services is continually looking for ways to decrease waste sent to landfills and lessen the impact of Iowa state government on the environment. One of the most recent developments is an expanded recycling program for employees with the addition of special receptacles for paper, plastic, aluminum and glass. These blue bins are currently located in the Capitol (Cafeteria, ground floor), Grimes Building (break room, ground floor), Lucas Building (vending area, ground floor) and the Hoover Building (break rooms, A-level and 3rd floors).

The new recycling stations, put in place around the first of September, are an expansion of the successful office paper recycling program that has been in place for several years. DAS custodians in each facility are responsible for

collecting the recycled materials, and then the items are sent to a local recycling plant.

Tim Ryburn, administrator of the Capitol Complex Maintenance division within DAS, says that while the program is fairly new and he hasn't received a lot of formal feedback, what he is hearing is that "employees seem to be liking the new service and [the] opportunity to participate."

Participating in the expanded recycling program is easy! The bins are clearly marked for sorting materials properly. Please remember that no food waste – or packaging or cans contaminated with food waste – should be disposed of in the

recycling bins. Plastic flatware and Styrofoam are also not recyclable and should not be placed in the bins. Also, please rinse containers before recycling them.

If you have any questions about the recycling program administered by DAS, please contact Tim Ryburn at [tim.ryburn@iowa.gov](mailto:tim.ryburn@iowa.gov) or (515) 281-3137.



## Activities Held for Cyber Security Awareness Month

October 2008 was National Cyber Security Awareness Month. The national campaign was organized by the National Cyber Security Alliance, the National Cyber Security Division of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center and other partners. The awareness campaign focused on educating the public, businesses, schools and government agencies about ways to secure their part of cyber space, computers and our nation's critical infrastructure, so that cyber security threats can be avoided.

In support of this national campaign, Governor Culver signed a proclamation declaring October as Cyber Security Awareness Month in Iowa as well. The DAS Information Security Office (ISO) promoted cyber security awareness throughout the month by distributing educational materials and sponsoring training sessions.

The ISO provided hundreds of

security awareness posters, calendars, bookmarks and brochures to state agencies. The ISO also set up informational tables at five Capitol Complex buildings to share security awareness materials with state workers and visitors. Over 500 individuals received information during these sessions.



Training sponsored by the ISO included sessions for IT staff covering web-based application security and wireless security. General security awareness training was also offered. This non-technical training covered the basics of information security for all staff.

Cyber security isn't just for one month, of course. It's a responsibility all state employees should be aware of all year. For more information about cyber security, visit the ISO website at <http://secureonline.iowa.gov/>.

## New Tenants in the Wallace Building

Two state offices are now calling the Wallace Building "home."

In mid-September the [State Fire Marshal's office](#) expanded its office into the Wallace Building to make room for a newly established program. The Electrical Licensing Board is now located on the 2nd floor (the main floor) of the building in the office space previously occupied by the Division of Criminal Investigation.

At the end of September, the [Rebuild Iowa Office \(RIO\)](#) relocated its office to the Wallace Building as well. The office was established by Governor Culver to oversee the state's recovery from this year's devastating tornadoes, floods and severe storms. The RIO was initially located in a leased facility near the Federal Emergency Management Agency's offices in Urbandale. The office has been moved to the Capitol Complex to reduce office space costs and place the RIO closer to most state agencies in order to better coordinate the state's efforts as recovery moves into the next phase. The RIO is also located on the 2nd/main floor of the Wallace Building.



## State Employees Riding DART For Free

State of Iowa employees in the Des Moines metro region are taking advantage of DART's (Des Moines Area Regional Transit) services for free by simply showing their State of Iowa employee ID.

Iowa employees utilized DART services more than 8,900 times in August and more than 9,550 times in September. Within only two months of implementation, the State and its employees have become the second highest consumer of the DART Unlimited Ridership program. Don't wait another day to take advantage of this great program!

With gasoline prices hitting record levels and an increased global concern to protect our environment, the Unlimited Access Program offers many timely advantages including:

- Saving money by reducing gas purchases.
- Reducing the wear and tear on personal vehicles, which decreases maintenance costs.
- Reducing stress related to driving (including road rage), congestion and parking frustrations by ensuring a safe, reliable ride to and from work or other destinations.



- Improving our environment by keeping more cars off the road, reducing greenhouse gases.
- Increasing the sense of community by meeting new neighbors and community members.

### Unlimited Access Program

The specific services available through the Unlimited Access Program are the following:

- All DART local route bus services
- All DART express routes (including Ankeny and Altoona)
- All DART shuttles (on-call routes, link shuttle, etc.)
- Bus Plus Paratransit Service

(for individuals with a disability that prevents them from using the fixed/regular route buses).

Visit the DART website – [www.ridedart.com](http://www.ridedart.com) – to view bus routes and times.

### Getting a DART Unlimited Access Sticker/Pass

For current employees who have a state ID, a DART sticker for the badge is available at the DAS Customer Service Center on Level A in the Hoover Building. The Customer Service Center is open 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Employees working 'off campus' who do not have a State of Iowa picture ID will receive DART Passes in lieu of photo IDs with stickers. These passes will be distributed through agency management liaisons or personnel assistants.

Also, DART is accepting applications for a new Riders Advisory group, the Transit Riders Advisory Committee (TRAC). Please visit [www.ridedart.com](http://www.ridedart.com) to find out more.

## What happened to the smoking huts?

If you're wondering what happened to the smoking hut west of the Hoover Building, you don't have to look far. The smoking hut that was west of the Hoover Building has been transformed into a bus shelter located on the east side of the Lucas Building.

With the cold winter months ahead this shelter will help keep those waiting for the bus more comfortable. There also are plans underway to move the smoking hut that is located by the Department of Public Safety Building to the corner of E. 12th and Grand.

If you have any questions please contact the DAS Customer Service Center at (515) 242-5120.

*The former Hoover smoking hut ...*



*... is now a bus shelter at the Lucas Building!*

## Hiring Practices Review

DAS-HRE has begun the review of executive branch agency hiring practices. This is an ambitious, far-reaching project that will be conducted over the next several months.

The initiative is part of Governor Culver's Executive Order Four. Agency hiring practices are to be reviewed by DAS-HRE to ensure that uniform hiring practices are being applied by state agencies using best practices reflecting the merit principles of Iowa Code sections 8A.411-.412. Based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations for improvement made by the DAS-HRE staff, following the review each agency is to work with DAS-HRE to make any necessary changes to their processes and policies.

The State's Merit System states that all appointments and promotions shall be made solely on the basis of merit and fitness, to be ascertained by examinations or other appropriate screening methods. In developing and administering such examinations or screening methods, several factors must be taken into account by the hiring agency. A key element of the review will be to determine if the screening methods and tools used by the agencies are effectively screening with those factors in mind.

The review will focus on how job-relatedness is considered in making the hiring decision. It will also focus on the fairness, equity and consistency of the agencies' hiring practices.

Numerous types of screening devices are used by state agencies. It is critical that these not have an adverse impact on certain groups of applicants. "Adverse impact" is a statistical showing that one group of applicants is not making it through the various steps

of the screening process in the same relative proportion (80%) as the group with the largest number of applicants making it through.

Screening out females, minorities, persons with disabilities, or other protected classes without a legitimate business reason is illegal and eliminates potentially good employees from the process. Screening for factors that are not connected to the essential functions and competencies required for the job may result in a bad fit between the applicant and the job. This can result in the failure of the job candidate to complete the probationary period or ongoing performance problems should the job candidate become a permanent employee.

The hiring process proceeds in stages. DAS-HRE screens for the minimum qualifications of the job title based on education, experience, and other related job requirements such as licenses, certifications and registrations. State agencies screen based on the specific requirements of the vacant position, as described in the position description questionnaire (PDQ). The hiring agency may legitimately screen for education and experience that are more specific (though not more or different from) than the DAS-HRE minimum requirements for the job title as a whole. Specific knowledge, abilities and skills (competencies) may be used to narrow the list of minimally qualified candidates, as long as they are job-related, non-discriminatory, and consistently applied to all candidates.

Another key step in the hiring process is the interview. An interview

is typically used to verify what the candidate has presented on paper and obtain additional information about the applicant's qualifications, how the candidate is likely to behave and react as an employee, and afford an opportunity for both the candidate and the agency to determine if there is sufficient interest to proceed. Just as the agency is evaluating the candidate, the candidate is also evaluating the agency, which may result in the withdrawal on the part of the candidate.

In this initial round of reviews of agency hiring practices, DAS will be looking at how the organizational structure of the agency supports the hiring process, the methods the agency is using to screen applicants and get them on board, and consistency in applying and documenting those methods. An initial meeting will take place with the department director to discuss the agency's hiring practices submitted in February 2008. Following this initial meeting, an assigned team of two DAS-HRE employees will meet with hiring supervisors to discuss specific hiring requisitions selected by DAS-HRE for review. At the end of the review, DAS-HRE will issue a final report and recommendations.

In keeping with the requirements of Executive Order Four, each agency's final report will be submitted to the Diversity Council for its information. The ultimate goal of the reviews is to improve problem areas identified and promote best practices in hiring.

The primary resource for finding the best screening method for your agency is the DAS-HRE Applicant Screening Manual. It can be found on the DAS-HRE website at [http://das.hre.iowa.gov/documents/publications/applicant\\_screening\\_manual.pdf](http://das.hre.iowa.gov/documents/publications/applicant_screening_manual.pdf).



## Space & Lease Management Grows to Fill Needs

The Space and Lease Management team within DAS is responsible for assignment, design and reconfiguration of office space for every state office building on the Capitol Complex and at the lab facility in Ankeny, as well as locating, negotiating and managing all of the leased space in Polk County for state offices. The team also is responsible for reviewing leases for state facilities outside Polk County, plus a couple of new responsibilities added this year. Except that up until earlier this year, that "team" consisted of just one person.



Sean Culbertson, Barbara Bendon, Mary Ann Ferguson

"It was getting pretty hard to be in that many places at once," said Barbara Bendon, Administrator of Space and Lease Management. Bendon has worked in this area for 13 years.

In May, Bendon hired Sean Culbertson as a Project Manager to help oversee the numerous moves, re-sets and other projects that come through this office. Mary Ann Ferguson joined the team in July as the primary Designer, mapping out spaces for office designs and redesigns. Both Culbertson and Ferguson brought valuable experience and expertise to the department, Culbertson having worked with Iowa Prison Industries for a number of years and Ferguson coming from a private furniture dealership.

The decision to add staff was the result of the increasing demand from customer agencies for services from

Space and Lease Management, as well as needing to devote more staff hours to ensure state offices are meeting requirements of the state fire marshal and the Americans With Disabilities Act guidelines.

Hiring a full-time designer also means agencies don't have to pay an outside vendor for that service because the cost is included in the Association Fee charged by DAS. Doing so results in significant savings for customers.

Coinciding with the added employees, however, were added responsibilities. Effective this year

the team has taken over management of cafeterias on the Capitol Complex, and was recently handed the reins of the state's surplus office furniture and equipment after Iowa Prison Industries decided not to renew their contract.

Even with the added responsibilities, the employees of the DAS Space and Lease Management team believe they are better equipped to improve services and efficiency while reducing costs to customers.

Plus, noted Ferguson, "It's the diversity of the work that I enjoy."

Culbertson agreed: "I had no idea the amount of work that went through this office! You're always doing something, and something different."

For DAS customers, it means having three times the staff to meet their space and lease needs, in whatever shape they take.

## State Surplus Undergoes Changes

Effective October 1, 2008, the Department of Administrative Services resumed responsibility for the State Surplus program. The Space Management and Leasing division will manage this important function. To efficiently and economically manage the State Surplus program there will no longer be a storefront operation. Services to departments will be delivered through an online auction service, Purple Wave, our vendor on state contract. To date, a total of eight training sessions have been held with representation from nearly all state departments in attendance. In conjunction with Purple Wave, we are in the process of developing standard operating procedures and an FAQ to assist departments with this new way of doing business. We plan to have those materials out to departments by November 14.

We are very excited about this new opportunity and although we acknowledge there will be challenges to overcome, we stand prepared to assist the departments every step of the way.

For additional information, you make contact Purple Wave directly at 1-877-242-8090 or visit them at [www.purplewave.com](http://www.purplewave.com), or you may contact Sean Culbertson at 515-281-3023 or e-mail [sean.culbertson@iowa.gov](mailto:sean.culbertson@iowa.gov) or Barbara Bendon at 515-281-8887 or e-mail [barbara.bendon@iowa.gov](mailto:barbara.bendon@iowa.gov).

## Déjà vu? No - The GAAP Team Does It Again - For the 15th time!

For the 15th consecutive year, the DAS-SAE GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) team has received the "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting." This respected award is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting. It represents a substantial accomplishment for the State of Iowa, and is something that

the GAAP Team works very hard each year to achieve.

To receive it, the GAAP Team must submit the State's CAFR (Comprehensive Annual Financial Report) in strict compliance with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. Once it has been reviewed and recognized by the Government Finance Officers

Association of the United States and Canada as an outstanding CAFR that has met their stringent criteria, the award is given to our very own GAAP Team representing the State of Iowa. The award-winning team consisted of Lisa Dooly, Rich Shoepner, Cindy Weber and Mohan Solomon (now retired).



## DAS Sells Fuzzy Little Friends to Raise Cold Hard Cash

An unexpected gift raised a few thousand dollars in October for Toys for Tots and the Food Bank of Iowa.

Nola Penland, a purchasing agent in DAS, was put in touch with a woman who had a collection of Beanie Babies and other stuffed animals she was looking to donate. "Ms. P.," a "wonderful lady" noted Penland, prefers to remain anonymous.

This was not a run-of-the-mill collection of toys, however. Ms. P. had acquired more than 2,000 of the little critters. Her hope was to give the toys to children to put smiles on their faces.

Nola Penland jumped at the opportunity, and quickly enlisted the help of other DAS employees who had organized fund-raisers for Toys for Tots and the Food Bank in the past. Because Toys for Tots and other organizations often do not redistribute stuffed animals directly, and also because of this year's flooding and the resulting increased demand on food pantries, a plan for selling the toys and splitting the proceeds between two very worthy causes was devised.

It would take two full conference rooms and three days of selling to find new homes for all of the animals, but in the end

\$2,880.50 was raised. The money was split equally between Toys for Tots and the Food Bank of Iowa, which is sure to bring happiness and many smiles to Iowa families.

Thanks to Penland and all the volunteers who put the event together, everyone who came to "adopt" a toy or two, and especially to Ms. P. for her generosity.



## Recent Events on the Capitol Complex

### Right:

The Iowa State Capitol is all decked out for the 2008 World Food Prize Laureate Award Ceremony on October 16.

Former U.S. Senators Robert Dole and George McGovern were honored at a ceremony attended by dignitaries and experts from more than 60 countries. Dole and McGovern were given the World Food Prize for their inspired, collaborative leadership that has encouraged a global commitment to school feeding and enhanced school attendance and nutrition for millions of the world's poorest children, especially girls.

For more information: [www.worldfoodprize.org](http://www.worldfoodprize.org).



### Left:

Tens of thousands take to the streets of Des Moines from the Capitol Complex for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure on October 25. The race raised more than \$500,000 for breast cancer research.

For more information: [www.komen.org](http://www.komen.org).



### Gear up for the 2009 Legislative Session!

The start of the 2009 Legislative session is right around the corner. The time is now to get prepared to make the most of it. Our staff of experts will help you better understand the policies and procedures surrounding the legislative process.

If you are new to state government or just need a refresher, these courses described below will help you maximize your effectiveness. Enroll today!

#### November Sessions

[Open Meetings/Public Records](#) (RM 011)  
Wednesday, November 12, 2008; 8:30 – 10:30

[Legislative Process in Iowa State Government](#) (GI 144)  
Friday, November 14, 2008; 8:30 – 4:30

[Statutory Construction and Legal Drafting](#) (RM 002)  
Friday, November 21, 2008; 8:30 – 10:30

#### December Sessions

[Government Ethics & Lobbying Act](#) (RM 009)  
Tuesday, December 2, 2008; 10:00 – 11:30

[Introduction to Administrative Law](#) (RM 001)  
Friday, December 5, 2008; 10:00 – 11:30

### Certified Public Manager (CPM) News

#### *Congratulations to CPM 8*

On October 31, members of the CPM 8 cohort had the opportunity to present their final group projects at the third annual **Innovations in Government** conference at Drake University. Congratulations to these individuals for their hard work and upcoming graduation on December 10.

If you are interested in knowing more about the group presentations or the CPM program, please contact Judy Akre at 515-281-6383.



#### *Get Onboard with CPM 11*

It's time to get your application in to be part of CPM Cohort 11. The next session of CPM will begin in **January 2009**. Application deadline is December 15. If you are looking for a professional development program that will allow you to earn graduate degree credit; contribute more significantly to your profession and network across agencies, this is for you!

More information about the CPM program can be found on the PDS website at:

<http://das.hre.iowa.gov/cpm/index.htm>

For assistance with enrollments in upcoming classes, CPM, survey development, one-on-one or group coaching, special sessions and any other training initiatives you have, please contact us via e-mail at: [pds@iowa.gov](mailto:pds@iowa.gov)

or

Judy Akre (515) 281-6383 - Mary Guillaume (515) 281-5456 - Brian Mayer (515) 281-6368 - Dawn Stohs (515) 725-2051